

Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in the application:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A system for protecting a roadway structure from damage caused by vehicular traffic and vice versa, the roadway structure extending above a roadway pavement, the system comprising:

a resilient, replaceable collar having a body with upper and lower surfaces, an opening provided therethrough and sized to accommodate the outer periphery of the roadway structure, and sloped side walls extending downward from the upper surface of the body towards the lower surface of the body, wherein the upper surface of the body is substantially planar and is in substantially planar alignment with an upper surface of the roadway structure; and

at least one resilient riser provided between the lower surface of the collar body and an upper surface of the roadway pavement, the resilient riser having a thickness so that the collar body and resilient riser together have a height substantially equal to the distance the roadway structure extends above the roadway pavement, wherein the lower surface of the collar body is planar and is in planar alignment with a planar upper surface of the resilient riser, the resilient riser maintaining the substantially planar alignment between the upper surface of the roadway structure and the upper surface of the collar body,

wherein the resilient, replaceable collar and the resilient riser are made of cured, recycled rubber scrap from tires.

Claim 2 (currently canceled).

Claim 3 (previously amended): The system as recited in claim 1, wherein the roadway structure comprises one of a manhole, a catch basin, or a utility access conduit.

Claim 4 (previously amended): The system as recited in claim 1, wherein the roadway pavement comprises one of asphalt, gravel or concrete.

Claim 5 (previously amended): The system as recited in claim 4, wherein a portion of the roadway pavement is stripped away so that the roadway structure extends above the roadway pavement.

Claim 6 (previously amended): The system as recited in claim 1, wherein the resilient, replaceable collar is circular with a central circular opening to snugly engage a cylindrical element of the roadway structure.

Claim 7 (previously amended): The system as recited claim 1, wherein the resilient, replaceable collar is one of square, rectangular, hexagonal, or octagonal with one of a circular, square or rectangular central opening to snugly engage one of a circular, square or rectangular element, respectively, of the roadway structure.

Claims 8 and 9 (previously canceled).

Claim 10 (currently canceled).

Application No. 09/549,002
Amendment dated February 4, 2004
Reply to Office Action of November 4, 2003

Claim 11 (previously canceled).